

PROJECT OVERSIGHT REPORT

Service, Knowledge, and Information Exchange
System (SKIES)
Employment Security Department (ESD)

Report as of Date:
November 2001

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Description: WorkSource Washington, this state's brand name for the One-Stop Career Center, is a federally-sponsored, national initiative to change the way employment-related services are provided to job seekers and employers. Previously, job seekers and employers find services by traveling to several different agencies at different locations. With the implementation of WorkSource, customers will be able to receive the services they need from a single career development center or convenient affiliate sites or self-service sites throughout the state. This new system is based upon four core principles: universal access, customer choice/focus, integrated services, and accountability.

Technology: The WorkSource One-Stop Operating System (OSOS), which has been renamed SKIES, will be a transfer system based upon Utah's UWORKS version of OSOS. The SKIES architecture contains three tiers: an Oracle database server, an applications server, and client software that employs web browser software (version 4.0 or higher of the Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer). The system will be built and maintained using the Oracle Development tool set. The Oracle Application Server resides on an IBM RS/6000 hardware platform running the AIX 4.3 UNIX operating system.

Life Cycle Stage: Conversion and Testing

Budget: The total federal implementation One-Stop grant that ended in 2000 was \$9.45 million, which included approximately \$3 million for information technology. The budget for the first two years included an allocation of \$275,000 to the WorkSource Information Technology Workgroup. These funds were used to perform a connectivity study and a feasibility study of the Customer Tracking and Accountability System, which evolved into SKIES. The third year budget included an allocation of \$1.9 million for acquisition of SKIES. On April 12, 2000, the Executive Policy Council approved the full expenditure of the \$1.9 million by June 30, 2000 to acquire the OSOS system and associated database software. An additional \$1.78 million will be provided from federal employment security funds for the implementation and operation of the system. As of the end of September 2001, a total of \$3,001,776 has been expended for SKIES. Although not charged against the project, ESD has also expended \$1.5 million for Oracle software.

Schedule: The April version of the SKIES implementation plan includes these milestones:

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| • Adopt UWORKS system | March 2000 |
| • Evaluate the Alpha SKIES application | November 2000 |
| • System ready for system test | June 2001 |
| • Conduct User Acceptance Testing (UAT) | September 2001 |
| • Conduct Pilot | December 2001 (revised) |
| • Begin SKIES statewide implementation | January 2002 (revised) |

Status: The SKIES project Executive Oversight Committee decided on October 22, 2001 to delay the SKIES implementation from December 3, 2001 to January 7, 2002. Reasons for the decision were the performance of the application, including unsatisfactory results of iteration

three of system testing; the need to test converted data; and the need to ensure that all the streams of project activity are integrated for implementation. The delay will allow for an additional test cycle, iteration four, in mid-November, and will avoid an implementation during the holiday season.

The user training proceeded on schedule. Pilot user training was completed in October. Train-the-trainer training was completed in early November. To mitigate the delay between training and implementation, the training system will be left on-line for individual review and training.

The SKIES project team continues to actively monitor risks. A risk assessment meeting was held on October 30, 2001 to review outstanding risks and associated mitigation plans. As a result of the meeting, the team is enhancing the process to include a status column to track risk plan status at each review date.

In addition to system testing, ESD plans to stress test the SKIES application and application environment during November, 2001. A testing tool suite from Mercury Interactive was acquired to support this effort. The tools will allow ESD to simulate an increasing load of users and determine the impact on all components of the application including the servers, database, routers, firewalls, and network to the end user. Work is already underway in planning a comprehensive close-out report and presentation to the ISB in early 2002. ESD executives will be available to address any member questions at the December ISB meeting.

Recommendations: DIS recommends that ESD continue to proactively monitor system testing to quickly identify and resolve issues. ESD also needs to execute mitigation plans for all of the near-term risks that have been identified.